

Serial No.: 09/683,417  
Attorney Docket No.: F-428

Patent

**AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as shown below.

Please amend claims 26 and 34 in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.121 to the clean version shown below. Claims 7-11, 14, 15, 17-25 and 28-33 are withdrawn without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim 1-6 (canceled)

7. (withdrawn) A mailbox system for decontaminating mail comprising:  
a door for allowing access to the interior of the mailbox;  
at least two additional doors for respective access to at least two mail compartments in the mailbox; and  
a decontamination system operatively connected to a controller for decontaminating mail.

8. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 7 further comprising:  
a controller having a timer for controlling a decontamination cycle;  
a power supply connected to the controller; and  
a display connected to the controller for providing indications.

9. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein, the door includes a lock operatively connected to the controller; and the door provides a hermetic seal when closed.

10. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 further comprising: means for detecting the presence of mail in the mailbox operatively connected to the controller for initiating the decontamination cycle.

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11. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein: the decontamination system includes a soft-electron beam source.

Claim 12-13 (canceled)

14. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein: the decontamination system includes a microwave source.

15. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein: the decontamination system includes a variable frequency microwave beam source.

Claim 16 (canceled)

17. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein:  
the decontamination system includes an ultra violet light source;  
the decontamination system includes a variable frequency microwave beam source; and  
the mailbox includes dividers for exposing mail pieces to ultra violet light.

18. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein: the decontamination system includes a chlorine gas source.

19. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein: the decontamination system includes a chlorine dioxide gas source.

20. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 19 wherein: the decontamination system includes a chlorine dioxide evacuation chamber.

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21. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 8 wherein: the decontamination system includes an ozone source.

22. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 21 wherein: the decontamination system includes a hopcolyte filter.

23. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 7 wherein: the decontamination system includes a dry heat source.

24. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 7 wherein: the decontamination system includes a super-heated steam source.

25. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 7 wherein: the mailbox includes a separation frame for separating mail pieces.

26. (currently amended) A mailbox for decontaminating mail comprising:  
a door for allowing access to the interior of the mailbox;  
a decontamination system operatively connected to a controller for decontaminating mail; and  
at least one divider for separating mail; and  
a keyed start switch used to send a decontamination start signal to the decontamination system.

27. (previously presented) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein the controller includes a communications device for providing status information to a user.

28. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein

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the decontamination system executes a decontamination cycle of approximately 200 to 300 degrees heat for approximately one hour.

29. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein the decontamination system comprises at least one infrared heating element.

30. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 26, wherein the decontamination system comprises a cooling cycle.

31. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 30, wherein the decontamination system comprises peltier effect element for providing the cooling cycle.

32. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 7, wherein the decontamination system comprises a gas canister opening that includes a lock system.

33. (withdrawn) The mailbox of claim 7, wherein the mailbox includes a door having a lock controlled by the controller and a cooling system controlled by the controller; the decontamination system including a heat source controlled by the controller; and the controller programmed for executing a decontamination cycle using the heat source and then initiating the cooling system; and polling the measurement of the temperature of the mailbox and using the temperature measurement to determine when to stop the cooling system and when to open the door lock.

34. (currently amended) A decontaminating device including a decontamination chamber comprising:

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a door for allowing access to the interior of the decontamination chamber;  
a decontamination system operatively connected to ~~the decontamination~~  
~~system and operatively connected to~~ a controller for decontaminating mail; and  
at least one divider for separating mail; and  
a keyed start switch used to send a decontamination start signal to the  
decontamination system.